



RHODE ISLAND MEDICAL SOCIETY

Chairperson Melissa Murray
Senate Health & Human Services Committee
Rhode Island Senate
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Support – S 2379

February 26, 2026

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Medical Society (RIMS), representing physicians across specialties and practice settings throughout the state, we write in support of S 2379, which would require insurance coverage without cost-sharing for vaccinations recommended by the Rhode Island Department of Health.

Vaccination remains one of the most effective preventive health interventions available to reduce serious illness, prevent hospitalizations, and protect vulnerable populations. Physicians across Rhode Island see firsthand how even modest financial barriers can delay or discourage patients from receiving recommended immunizations. Eliminating cost-sharing helps ensure timely access to evidence-based preventive care and promotes equitable protection across communities.

RIMS appreciates that the legislation establishes a consistent statewide framework for vaccine coverage while incorporating Department of Health review and advisory committee input. This approach supports transparency, clinical practicality, and alignment with public health goals.

We respectfully offer one technical clarification and one optional refinement for the Committee's consideration:

Technical Clarification:

RIMS recommends adjusting references tied to immunization recommendations to allow flexibility consistent with clinical practice by using "ACIP or" rather than restrictive language.

The distinction between "and" and "or" is significant. "And" requires agreement between ACIP and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) before coverage applies. If those organizations issue different recommendations, coverage could be denied despite strong pediatric guidance. Using "or" ensures Rhode Islanders maintain access to vaccines recommended by either nationally recognized authority.

This adjustment helps prevent unintended delays in implementation when recommendations are issued by one recognized body before another or apply differently across patient populations.

Optional Refinement:

Because this legislation applies to immunization across the lifespan, the Committee may wish to consider referencing additional nationally recognized medical professional organizations, such as the American College of Physicians, to ensure explicit representation of adult medicine expertise alongside existing clinical guidance.

These suggestions are intended to support long-term clarity and consistency while fully preserving the bill's strong public health intent.

The Rhode Island Medical Society appreciates the Committee's leadership in advancing preventive care and respectfully urges passage of S 2379.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'NH', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nadine Himelfarb, MD
President